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SUBJECT: U/S BURNS' SEPTEMBER 25, 2009 CONVERSATION WITH
PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER JOSE ANTONIO GARCIA BELAUNDE

Classified By: WHA Assistant Secretary Thomas A. Shannon.
Reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (U) September 25, 2009; 4:00 p.m.; New York City, NY, USA.

¶2. (U) Participants:

UNITED STATES
U/S Willian J. Burns
DAS Christopher J. McMullen
Sara Mangiaracina (WHA Notetaker)

PERU
FM Jose Antonio Garcia Belaunde
Luis Valdivieso, Peruvian Ambassador to the United States
Luis Chavez, Peruvian Deputy PermRep to the UN

¶3. (S) SUMMARY. U/S Burns and Peruvian FM Garcia Belaunde discussed the threat posed to Peru by a resurgent Shining Path movement working with narcotraffickers, internal political concerns, and the situation in Honduras. Regarding Honduras, Garcia Belaunde called for further action from the USG and the UN; he also cautioned that President Zelaya's radical inner circle poses a problem in attempts to craft a viable solution to the crisis. END SUMMARY.

SHINING PATH AND NARCOTRAFFICKERS POSE SERIOUS THREAT

¶4. (C) Highlighting concerns of collaboration between narcotraffickers and mercenary remnants of the Shining Path (SP) Movement, Garcia Belaunde raised the need for more equipment, training, and greater intelligence sharing. Narcotraffickers are using SP mercenaries to bring chemical precursors into Peru to produce cocaine, Garcia Belaunde explained. He said Peru would be able to preempt a revival of the SP threat within two or three years if increased bilateral cooperation were to begin now. Otherwise, the SP movement will increase to 500 core members from the current 150-200.

¶5. (C) Garcia Belaunde specifically requested helicopters and night vision goggles, as well as increased intelligence sharing and security training.

BAGUA VIOLENCE: "A TRAGEDY OF ERRORS"

¶ 6. (C) Touching upon the Bagua deaths in June, Garcia Belaunde noted the incident was a tragedy, resulting from the lack of adequate information about the seriousness of social discontent in the indigenous community, which ultimately led to the deaths of 34 individuals, 24 of whom were policemen. He said Peruvian forces are better prepared now for any new disturbances, and the dialogue with the indigenous community seems to have defused some of the prior discontent. In this regard, he said the GOP had received threats of further uprisings for September but nothing had materialized, suggesting that the ongoing dialogue between the GOP and the indigenous community was having a salutary effect.

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

¶ 7. (U) Garcia Belaunde noted President Garcia leaves office in two years but there is no clear front-runner to replace him. He said the opposition, including indigenous leader Ollanta Humalla, has not shown much strength in recent polls, indicating that the ruling APRA party has a good chance of retaining power in the 2011 elections.

HONDURAS: "A FRANK AND OPEN CONVERSATION"

¶ 8. (C) Commenting that while the USG has acted on principle and custom by not mixing trade issues and politics, Garcia Belaunde stated Micheletti has not felt the full pressure of the U.S. dissatisfaction with the actions of the de facto regime. He indicated more needs to be done, on the part of the United States as well as the UN.

¶ 9. (S) Garcia Belaunde said the situation in Honduras has grown more complicated since President Zelaya returned. He stated that the Cubans, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans organized Zelaya's return, hoping to bypass the OAS/Arias mediation effort and thus force an alternative resolution to the crisis. Garcia Belaunde maintained that Zelaya's original destination was the UN office; however, because that building was being observed, he went to the Brazilian Embassy instead, which Belaunde said was an astute move on Zelaya's part. Garcia Belaunde commended the Brazilians for their admirable performance under difficult circumstances.

¶ 10. (S) Garcia Belaunde also expressed concern over the resolution of the crisis, stating that while Zelaya seems willing to accept the San Jose Accords (SJA), neither his VP nor his FM would likely do so. He said Zelaya's weak personality is dominated by stronger forces around him, which is why FM Rodas has called for the SJA to require not only the return of Zelaya to office, but also the members of his cabinet.

¶ 11. (S) Garcia Belaunde concluded by expressing Peruvian support for the proposed OAS mission to Honduras. He indicated the Panamanians need to be less vocal publicly in their approach, adding that the OAS mission's success would depend upon Micheletti's ability to act independently of other sectors (e.g., the military, private sector, et al.), which Garcia Belaunde thought might be problematic.

CLINTON